



#131

Moon Lake Riparian Association Newsletter
Moonlake.org

Winter 2019



Friendly Reminder from the Board:

**2019 Dues \$25.00 Payable to:
MLRA
c/o Eric Zorr
P.O. Box 664
Land O'Lakes, WI 54540**

Thanks to the 20 households who have already sent in their dues. Additional donations are being taken for the Moon Lake invasive species mitigation fund.

Happy Winter!

From the Editors

We hope this winter newsletter finds you happy and warm, whether soaking in the sun down south or shoveling snow! Regardless of our winter locations, everyone is surely looking forward to summer on Moon Lake. In the meantime, let's enjoy the rest of winter (it may be with us for quite a while). Our MLRA President, Bob Turnquist, is busy grooming ski trails, so be sure to check them out! As a reminder, the MLRA website has info on local ski and snowmobile trails at:

<http://www.moonlake.org/xc-ski-and-snowmobile-trail-reports/>

This newsletter is packed with happenings at and around Moon Lake – Enjoy!

Be sure to visit the Lake Web Cam!

<https://moonlake.click2stream.com/>



We remember our Moon Lake residents who have passed:

Ruth Dambeck

Ron Fredrick

Miracle on Moon Lake

By Eric Zorr

A note from your author: I'm telling this story to the best of my ability to remember what happened and what I was thinking at the time. I do NOT have any medical training, so some of what I have written is my attempt to explain what I thought was happening. I did not stop to interrupt the work of those who have been trained to deal with these situations. The main reason for writing is the hope that those who read it can pass on the possible dangers of going off the snowmobile trails. Also, I did not ask the names of the dedicated men and women who risked their own lives to save others. However, as members of Moon Lake Riparian Association (MLRA), I felt we should all know how blessed we are that they volunteer to serve, and to have the great network of rescue squads in our area. A special thank you goes out to the Lac Vieux Desert Police department, the Land O Lakes, WI Fire & Rescue team and the Conover, WI Fire and Rescue team.

Do miracles happen today or is your storyteller reading too much into the events of Friday, March 1st, 2019?

The background

One of my sisters has not only one, but two rare medical conditions: aplastic anemia, an autoimmune deficiency, and Waldenstorm's Macroglobulinemia, a blood cancer.

I, on the other hand, have been blessed with very good health. However, two and half weeks ago while I was removing some of the 50+ inches of snow we've received this season, I thought I tweaked a muscle in my chest. Three days later I began to develop a rash, which has since been confirmed to be Shingles. (On a side note for those of you over fifty, there is a vaccine - of which I was not aware. You might want to ask your doctor about it!)

A couple days after that, and on top of my shingles, I got a nasty head cold. My aforementioned sister is also my daughter's godmother. She, my daughter, son-in-law, wife and I were to celebrate my daughter's birthday by attending a traveling stage production of the "Wizard of Oz" on March 3rd in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where my daughter lives.

We've had the tickets for months. Travel plans were made and vacation time, for those still working, had been arranged. However, by that point I was starting to wonder if I would be well enough to make the trip. My sister's health concerns require almost weekly doctor's monitoring, and at her weekly appointment we got the word. Either she or I could go, but not both. Since I was currently the sick one, we had Grandma Zorr take my place.

Friday night March 1st, 2019

It was snowing heavily outside. I was watching about the last thirty minutes of a movie when out of my peripheral vision I noticed a brief flash of light. Turning my head toward the lake, I saw nothing. So, I focused again on the movie. About fifteen minutes later it happened again: a brief flash of light out on the lake. With the snow falling and trees lining much of the shoreline I still could not see what caught my eye. I turned off the TV and the one reading light that was on. With the lights off I could barely make out a dim light on the south shore. Reaching for a spotter scope,

- I was able to zoom in and see a snowmobile stopped on the lake and a figure slowly walking in front of its headlight.

Continued on pg. 3

At this point I need to share that I do not own a snowmobile and in my 60+ years I can count on one hand how many times I've been on one.

Due to my lack of snowmobile experience I thought, "It sure seems a strange time to be out ice fishing." As I watched, the person walking seemed to take a knee, which looked to me like he was checking a hole or tip-up - not beginning to struggle through one to two feet of water and slush that I found out was under the two to four feet of snow covering the lake.

A second snowmobile seemingly appeared out of the snowfall from the east. At this point my dog pawed at our front door letting me know it was time for our last walk of the night. As we left, I vividly remember thinking, "at least they are buddy-fishing."

Upon returning from our walk, I thought I saw the light from one of the machines sweep over part of the far shoreline, turn to the west, and stop. As I was turning off the lights and planning to go to bed, I saw the lights go off on one of the snowmobiles. It then dawned on me the lights were also off on the other one.

You, as fellow MLRA members, know sounds carry well over the water during the summer. As it turns out, sound also carries well over the ice and through a heavy snow storm during the winter.

Something seemed off to me, so I opened the sliding window to our back deck. The snow was coming down so heavily I could not see the solar lights that are about half way from the deck to the lake.

It was at that point I thought I heard a faint voice say something to the affect, "we are not leaving thirty thousand dollars' worth of equipment out here." Then nothing. I could not see, nor did I hear, anything else. After about two minutes, I closed the sliding door, but thinking about what I thought I heard was bothering me, so I made the decision to call the Lac Vieux Desert Police in Watersmeet.

I told the dispatcher about the two snowmobiles, my first thought of ice fishing, and what I thought I had heard. He asked me, if I thought they were stuck or drunk? I said, I did not know and was not sure I should have even called. However, I know most of the people that live on the south shore across from our place and none of them come up during the winter. He said he had one car out on patrol, but it was on the far north side of the township. He would send it out to my place to have the officers take a look. He said it may take them twenty or thirty minutes with the snow. I told him I'd turn on the lights and keep watch for the officers.

The Police

Two officers arrived about thirty minutes later. After explaining what I thought I had heard, they each took out their high-powered flashlights and we went onto the back deck. The snow was still falling heavily, making it very difficult to see anything out on the lake. As they moved their lights slowly across the lake, I caught a brief reflection of green. It wasn't until the next day when I realized the reflection was one of the state registration stickers. The snowmobile was black and about half buried in the snow; without the sticker we would not have seen the

Continued on pg. 4

snowmobile at all. Just a moment after spotting the snowmobile we heard someone call "Help! Help! My dad is dying!" One of the officers shouted, "We are the police. What is your situation?" The response was again "Help! Help! My dad is dying!" The officer replied, "Stay with your machine. Stay with your machine. We are getting help. We are getting help."

The three of us returned to the police car and they called in the situation via radio. The dispatcher said they would contact the Land O Lakes Fire & Rescue team & ambulance. This only took about two or three minutes and we returned to the deck. One officer tried walking down to my shore line from the house, a distance of about thirty yards. However, after getting about half way with the snow up to his waist he realized making it out to the lake was not possible.

The officer yelled out, that help was on the way. At that point we heard the voice call again "Help! Help! My dad is dying," but it sounded a little further away than before. The officer yelled again "Stay with your machine." A minute or so went by (*I've got to admit the amount of time to which I'm referring is my best guess. I did not have a way to check actual time and I'm sure with the issues at hand everything seemed to take longer than reality*), and we heard, "Help! Help! My dad is dying," and again the voice seemed even further away. *At the time we thought the young man had heard that help was on the way and was trying to let us know the situation was urgent. Looking back, I now think he had not heard the officers and didn't realize a rescue attempt was underway.*

One of the officers said, "Where is he going?" I said, "That's South Moon Lake Road over there. If they are not from the area, they may not know which way to go if they make it to the road. And, I know that there are few, if any, folks over there year-round. Maybe you two should take your car and see if you can find them somewhere. I can stay here and wait for the ambulance. The driveways on that side of the lake are about two to three times the length of mine, so if they've not been plowed, you will probably not be able to drive down them." I told them I'd light up everything I could on my house, in the hope of giving them an idea of where they were from that side of the lake. The police returned to their cruiser and said that if they found anyone, they would bring them back to my house. I got the lights turned on inside and outside of the house, just as the ambulance arrived.

The Ambulance Crew

There were two women, and an EMT trainee with the ambulance. The two women and I went to the deck. I told them what had transpired so far. Then we saw a spotlight across the lake which we assumed was the police car searching South Moon Lake Road.

A few minutes later, six men arrived with another truck pulling a trailer with a rescue gator. There was now a flurry (*I know, bad pun*) of activity. As the ambulance team was pulling out supplies such as blankets, gloves, an aluminum stretcher basket etc., some of the guys were loading it onto the gator.

Once loaded, the gator began to climb the snow that had been plowed to the edge of our drive way. *I've included pictures so you'll have a better feel of the conditions.* However, it was now about 12:30 in the morning of March 2nd. The emergency lights from all the vehicles were on.

Continued on pg. 5

It was cold, snowing, and we still did not have firsthand knowledge of the full situation.

The gator made it to the top of the snow pile and sunk just below its axles! After a few tries to dislodge the gator, it became clear we needed to shovel it out. The rescue crew grabbed all the snow shovels we own and got to work.

At this point the police returned with one of the two snowmobilers: a young man who seemed to be in shock. He said his father was still out there. They put him into the back of the ambulance and started to work on him.

All of my shovels were being used to clear the gator so I had a minute to talk with one of the policemen about what happened and how they found the young man. He said they had been shining the spotlight along the north side of South Moon Lake Road and had not seen anything. The other officer said we should probably leave our windows open in case we can hear them but not see them. This turned out to be a great decision as a few moments later, they heard a faint call for help from behind them. Backing up about ten to fifteen yards, they spotted the young man about twenty feet from the edge of the road, the snow chest deep on him. He was about exhausted, but still too far for the police to reach him. They told him he made it that far, he had to push through! (*This was to encourage him to keep trying as they also tried to reach him.*) He made it to the road. He had no boots or gloves and his feet were soaking wet. As the police were transporting him back to the ambulance, he told them, "My dad did not make it." When their snowmobiles got stuck, they thought they could just walk to the closest shore, about twenty-five yards or so. The young man led the way to make it easier for his father. However, after only a few steps, he lost his boots as they got sucked off by the slush and snow. He then fell and lost his gloves. His father lost his boots after only about ten feet and realized he could not make it to the shore. He had to try to get back to the snowmobile. Unfortunately, the combination of the water, slush, snow, and cold quickly zapped all his strength.

Hearing that there was still someone out there, one of the Land 'O Lakes rescue team members decided to try to walk out. He happened to have his snow shoes, the only pair the rescuers had with them, as they had already been in his truck. He had no poles, so I brought him my cross-country ski poles. *They were a bit long for him as I'm 6'4" and he was about 5'10" or so.* He put on a head lamp, grabbed a blanket and left in search of the boy's father.

At this point, guys were still digging the snow from around the gator. Two folks were in the back of the ambulance working with the young man. The woman who was driving the ambulance came out and she and I went back onto the deck so she could think about the best possible strategy once the gator was cleared. She noticed the head lamp on the gentleman walking out on the ice and made the comment, "I'll have to remember to put in a request for more head lamps, each of our guys should have one. We also need to have snowshoes, he's wearing his own." I told her I had two pair of men's snowshoes in the garage and they were free to use them if needed. She said to get them just in case.

While in the garage getting the snowshoes, I saw my aluminum ramps that I use for getting my lawn mower into the back of my pickup truck. I brought out the ramps and the snowshoes. By wedging the ramps under its back tracks, we were quickly able to get the gator backed out of the snow bank. The men then went about shoveling down the snow bank, with the thought that the gator would make it, if it did not need to climb that bank first. This worked!

Continued on pg. 6

Two men climbed into the gator and they made it down the hill, across the lawn of snow, down the bank, and out onto the lake. However, fortune was still a fickle friend, and about thirty yards from shore the gator got stuck again, buried in water, slush and snow.

The rescue team then made the decision to carry the father off the lake by hand. Two of the men that had been digging the gator free, started to put on the snowshoes I had supplied.

The first rescue member who had gone out on foot, had found the father. He radioed back that he needed more blankets, and that the man could not move his arms or legs, but was alive. Three men then began the trek out onto the lake. Even with the snowshoes, it was slow going. They stopped at the gator and removed the aluminum stretcher to carry it out with them. The two men wearing the snowshoes led the way, however, the gentleman without snowshoes quickly sunk down to the point the water and slush combination was over the top of his boots and the water started to seep into them.

With the gator stuck again and realizing they were going to have to carry the father off the lake by hand, the decision was made to call the Conover Fire & Rescue team for more help. The Land O Lakes team requested that they bring their gator and extra men, with the thought that their gator could help retrieve Land O Lakes'. When it came to the gators it seemed Murphy's Law took over events of the evening. When the Conover team got to their fire station, they radioed the Land O Lakes team. Conover's gator broke down last Sunday on a rescue attempt of another snowmobile out on Pioneer Lake. At least in that case, the gator was still on the shore when the tracks came off of it! So, Conover's team was coming without the gator. About forty minutes or so later they arrived with another six or eight men.

It had been decided that the gator had to get off the lake that night as the forecast was calling for an extreme cold front to arrive sometime Sunday night. If the gator was still out there, it may have been stuck for the rest of the winter, frozen in the ice. In the meantime, the other three Land O Lakes rescuers made it to the man still on the lake. With the conditions they were fighting, it took about thirty to forty minutes just to get out there. One of them told me later it took everything the four of them had just to get the aluminum stretcher under him. Then they started the long trek back. With one step and a lunge of the stretcher, trying to keep the man safely in the stretcher, but out of the water and slush, they inched closer to shore. Every step required a huge effort.

When the Conover team arrived, they jumped into action. Some of them grabbed shovels and headed to the gator. Others went out to take turns carrying the man. Even with the help of the extra men, it took about an hour to get the man to the edge of shore on the north side of Moon Lake. At this point, the men who had been carrying him were spent. Someone asked if there was a rope that we could tie to the stretcher so more of us could help pull him up the rest of the yard and hill alongside the house. Earlier, I had grabbed a waterski rope from our garage and it was out on the gator. As there were no other ropes, one of the men went out to the gator and brought back the ski rope. I'm not exactly sure how long a rope it is but my guess is about 75 feet or so. One end was tied to the stretcher. The rest was stretched up the hill towards the driveway. Men were spaced out about every four feet or so like a tug of war getting ready to pull in one direction. Then one, two, three, pull! After two pulls they were able to get the end of the rope, up to the driveway where the two policemen & I took hold of the handle and pulled while

Continued on pg. 7

walking down the driveway. It took two more attempts to get the man to the top of the hill! The ambulance team, had a power gurney out and ready, it took seven people to get the man lifted just the eight inches from the stretcher onto the gurney. From there, it was a few seconds and he was in the back of the ambulance and in less than a minute, which I estimate was between 2:15 and 2:30 A.M. the ambulance was on its way to Eagle River.

Saturday March 2nd, about 10:30 A.M.

One of the Land O Lakes rescue members stopped by and let me know both men were fine and have been released from the hospital. He said they were so lucky to be alive.

Saturday March 2nd, about 1:30 P.M.

There was a knock at my door, and I got to meet the father from the previous night.

I'm not sharing his name as anyone could have had a similar accident. Over the four years we've lived up here, probably a hundred or more people have snowmobiled across Moon Lake, either from the Pineaire Resort/Motel, or from the snowmobile trail between Land O Lakes and Watersmeet. It was just a combination of snow, slush, and water on the ice. Thank God this all worked out okay.

I started this story with the question, do miracles happen today, or am I reading too much into a bunch of coincidences? I'm going to list some of them and you may decide:

- 1. I got shingles and therefore was not in Fort Wayne.*
- 2. I decided to finish watching a movie in our living room, not in the basement as I usually do. With the snow pushed off the deck all season, there is no view of the lake from our basement TV room.*
- 3. The two flashes of light made me curious.*
- 4. After walking the dog, I noticed the lights one more time.*
- 5. Sound carried the men's voices through the snowstorm to my ears.*
- 6. What I think I heard, made me call the police.*
- 7. The Police and I heard the distant call for help.*
- 8. The police thought to open their windows while driving down South Moon Lake Road. Then they heard and found the young man.*
- 9. We had three sets of snowshoes. After everything was over, one of the rescuers said without them they never would have made it to the man on the lake.*

Continued on pg. 8

10. It was from our house we heard the calls for help. One of the policemen told me they checked the road to the boat landing and it was impassible. To the best of his knowledge, there would not have been another way onto Moon Lake given the current conditions... except from our property.

Those are just a few of the things that had to go right for things to work out the way they did. Perhaps it was luck, the sheer will to ensure survival, or perhaps it was divine providence. Whatever it was, two men have their lives ahead of them, and I thank God for that.

P.S.: If you want to hear the story of the stuck gator, it may cost you a drink, but it's a pretty good story too!!



CHARLIE'S UP NORTH MARKET

The new grocery store in Land O'Lakes is becoming a reality! Construction is in full swing and we'll all eagerly await the 2019 Grand Opening. What a welcomed sight for LOL. Photos by Peg Zorr



LAKE NOTES – MARCH 2019

By Dale Sharpee

Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program (CLMP):

As of March 1st, we have not received the data from the measuring and sampling that was done in 2018. When it is available, it will be posted on the website (moonlake.org). The State of Michigan budget will provide funding for the 2019 monitoring program offered through the CLMP. I have registered to have Moon Lake participate in this monitoring program. So, 2019 will be the **25th** year that sampling and measuring has been undertaken on Moon Lake.

Record of Ice Cover on Moon Lake:

The current winter season is the 13th season that we have recorded the ice-over and ice-free dates as well as the number of days of ice cover. Moon Lake was ice-free on May 7, 2018. So, ice was on the lake for 149 days during the 2017-2018 winter season. The longest time that the lake has been covered with ice in the past 13 winter seasons was 167 days during the 2013-2014 winter. The shortest time was 113 days during the winter of 2011-2012. During 8 of the last 13 winter seasons the lake has been covered with ice for 144 to 167 days.

Be Informed...

A new Michigan Boating Law (SB 1072 of 2018 (PA 0451 of 2018)) went into effect in December 2018:

The new law indicates that a person **shall not**:

- Launch or transport watercraft or trailers unless they are free of aquatic organisms, including plants;
- Transport a watercraft without removing all drain plugs and draining all water from bilges, ballast tanks, and live wells;
- Release unused bait into the water

The MI Secretary of State Office has agreed to include in each boater registration packet (close to 1 million over the course of the next 3 years - starting this year) the attached "New Boater Law Effective 2019" card.

Michigan Waterways Commission has made combating Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) one of its top five priorities for 2019.

FUN FACT:

Did you ever wonder what happens to fish when the lake freezes?

The layer of ice that forms on top of a lake, pond, river, or stream provides some insulation that helps the lake retain its heat. Because warm water sinks in very cold freshwater, fish in these water bodies often gather in groups near the bottom. Most fish simply school in the deepest pools and take a "winter rest."

In this resting state, fishes' hearts slow down, their needs for food and oxygen decrease, and they move about very little. If you've ever gone ice fishing, you know that a long line, a slow, colorful lure, and a hearty portion of patience are often required to land this quiet quarry!

Your 2019 MLRA Board:

- President: Bob Turnquist
turnquist.bob@gmail.com
- Vice President: Steve Sunderland
Sssloon13@gmail.com
- Treasurer: Eric Zorr
ezorr0@mac.com
- Secretary: Peggy Zorr
pzorr@mac.com

Board Members:

Dale Sharpee

rhodale@alphacomm.net

Carol Youmans

pawsandme@yahoo.com

Frank Kuchevar

kathfrank@alphacomm.net

FUN FACT:

First Snowmobile-

Carl Eliason of Sayner, Wisconsin developed the prototype of the modern snowmobile in the 1920s when he mounted a two-cylinder motorcycle engine on a long sled, steered it with skis under the front, and propelled it with single, endless track. Eliason made 40 snowmobiles, patented in 1927. Upon receiving an order for 200 from Finland, he sold his patent to the FWD Company of Clintonville.

Check out the new artwork popping up around Land O' Lakes...



Eagles nesting at the Snow Flake Ice Rink



Dog Sled Team at the corner of 45 and B
Photos by Bob Turnquist



Moon Lake Family Recipe Corner:

Send us your “tried and true” recipes (meals, snacks, beverages) that you rely on to please your Moon Lake visitors!

This recipe comes from our Aunt Ginny, easy to whip together and so tasty for the whole gang! 😊

Chicken Supreme Casserole

- 3 c. cooked chicken, chopped
- 1 pkg long grain & wild rice (or box)
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 medium jar pimento, or grated carrot
- ½ yellow onion, chopped
- 2 cans French style green beans – drained
- 1 c. mayo
- 1 can water chestnuts – drained and chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 TBS lemon juice
- ½ tsp curry powder or paprika (optional)
- 3 c. shredded cheddar cheese

Spray a 9x13 pan, prepare rice as directed, mix with all other ingredients *except* cheese. Pour into pan, top with cheese.

Bake at 350 degrees for 45 min

Cool 10 min before serving



How Moon Lake Found You and other Moon Lake Stories!

Much thanks to Eric Zorr for capturing his incredible Moon Lake story. We want to hear more!

Send your memories to Steve at sssloon13@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve and Carleen Sunderland